

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Summary

In this Office Action, the drawings and the specification were objected to. Further, claims 1-27 stand rejected. Specifically, claim 26 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1-5, 7, 17-20, and 24-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6083811 issued to Riding et al. (hereinafter "*Riding*") in view of Applicant's admitted prior art (hereinafter "AAPA"). Claims 6, 8-16, and 21-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over *Riding* in view U.S. Patent 6777310 issued to Inuzuka (hereinafter "*Inuzuka*"). Thus, claims 1-27 currently are pending.

In response, Applicant has amended the drawings and the specification, overcoming the Examiner's objections. Further, Applicant has cancelled claims 26-27, without prejudice, and amended claims 1-8, 10-12, 16-22, and 24-25, placing them in condition for allowance. Thus, claims 1-25 remain pending, and for at least reasons set forth below, are allowable.

Amendments to the Drawings

Figures 1a, 1b, and 2 were objected to for failure to designate the figures as prior art. In response, Applicant has submitted corrected drawings remedying the failure.

Figures 2-4 were objected to for various reasons including dark shading, unlabeled views, and not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims. In response, Applicant has submitted corrected drawings remedying the deficiencies and to clarify the depictions.

Amendments to the Specification

The specification was objected to because, as Examiner asserted, the abstract was not descriptive of the invention. In response, Applicant has amended the abstract according to Examiner's instruction.

Furthermore, various amendments were made to the specification to correspond to the amendments made to the drawings, as noted above.

In addition, the title was amended to better describe the invention.

Amendments to the Claims

As noted earlier, claims 1, 8, 16, 22, and 24-25 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-5, 7, 17-20, and 24-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over *Riding* in view of *AAPA*. Claims 6, 8-16, and 21-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over *Riding* in view of *Inuzuka*.

Rejections of claims 26-27 have been rendered moot by their cancellations.

With respect to claims 1-25, section 103(a) explicitly requires the Examiner to view the invention as a whole. Claim 1, as amended, recites a method for grinding a semiconductor wafer comprising cutting and severing a semiconductor wafer into a plurality of portions, the cutting and severing being performed in a manner that allows the portions to remain proximally disposed with each other as if the semiconductor wafer had not been cut; applying tape to a front side of the as if uncut semiconductor wafer, and grinding a backside of the taped as if uncut semiconductor wafer. Therefore, when viewed as whole, claim 1 is directed towards a method of grinding a cut semiconductor wafer as if it was uncut.

In contrast, *Riding* teaches a method for producing thin dice out of a unitary, undiced fragile material. *Riding* repeatedly discusses forming "grooves" or "saw cuts",

both of which should be formed “to a depth equal to the desired die thickness plus 1 mil.” See *Riding*, 3:49-52; see also claim 1 (“forming grooves”). It is *Riding*’s grinding step that actually dices the material. Nowhere does *Riding* disclose that wafers are cut and severed into portions prior to taping and/or grinding. *Riding* states that its method for producing dice does not suffer from the drawbacks of handling individual dice. See *Riding*, 2:35-44. No one of ordinary skill in the art will modify *Riding*’s grinding method performed prior to cutting and severing the semiconductor wafer into portions, with Applicant’s grinding method performed after cutting and severing with the semiconductor wafer, with the semiconductor after merely in an “as if uncut” state.

Thus, when viewed as a whole, claim 1 is patentable over *Riding*.

Independent claims 8 and 17 contain similar limitations as claim 1, and therefore, for at least the same reasons, also are patentable over *Riding*.

Neither AAPA nor *Inuzuka* remedy the deficiencies of *Riding* and, therefore, even if the Examiner’s readings and/or applications of AAPA and *Inuzuka* are correct (an issue Applicant need not address at this time in view of the deficiency of *Riding* set forth above), *Riding*, even when combined with AAPA and/or *Inuzuka*, does not teach or suggest the present invention as claimed in independent claims 1, 8, and 17.

Claims 2-7, 9-16, and 18-24 depend from one of claims 1, 8, and 17, thereby incorporating the recitations of one of claims 1, 8, and 17. Therefore, for at least the same reasons, claims 2-7, 9-16, and 18-25 are patentable over the cited references.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submits that claims 1-24 are in condition of allowance. Thus, entry of the offered amendments and early issuance of Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge shortages or credit overpayments to Deposit Account No. 500393.

Respectfully submitted,
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